OCCUPATIONAL

HEALTH & SAFETY

SEPTEMBER 2009

TRAINING UP IN A DOWNTURN

Also inside: 2008 Best Safety Performers

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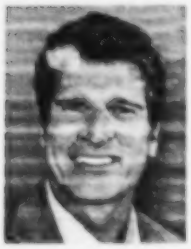

ESSENTIAL SKILLS ARE ESSENTIAL TO SAFETY

by Michael Herzog

Are your health and safety manuals written in a foreign language?

According to recent statistics, they may as well be because many Canadian workers lack the essential skills necessary to understand them.

Research by Statistics Canada[1] reveals that 48 per cent of Canadian adults do not have the reading skills needed to fully understand the information contained in policy and safety manuals.

Why is this important? Because if 48 per cent of your workforce can't understand the manual, the safety of your workers is at stake.

Essential skills are often key

The implication of this research was clearly demonstrated in a study by the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council.[2] They found a direct correlation between low essential skills and the potential for driving incidents, such as spills and accidents. The cause was not a lack of safety training; it was a lack of essential skills.

What are essential skills? They are a specific set of skills that form the foundation for learning. Without them, it is difficult to build technical skills, such as those needed to safely operate equipment.

The reverse is also true: workers with stronger essential skills have higher levels of productivity and safety.

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada[3] has established nine essential skills: reading, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, thinking skills, computer skills, working with others and continuous learning.

How do you build these skills within your workforce? It can take years to bring someone up several grade levels through academic upgrading.

There is a better way. Using essential skills technology, you can identify the tasks necessary to successfully perform a job and then focus your training for maximum results.

For example, if a worker needs to read simple flowcharts of emergency response measures, that is a document use skill. Document use is different from reading, and it's seldom taught in academic settings. That's why it's possible for workers with solid academic credentials to struggle with some tasks. The good news is that it is a teachable skill, and it's transferable. Once a worker knows how to read a flowchart, he or she can read flowcharts of all kinds.

Identifying job tasks

By identifying job tasks, you can identify the essential skills necessary to perform them. Then, you can assess the worker's skills and build training to strengthen them. It's a remarkably fast process and it's highly effective.

Still, some organizations try to take a shortcut. They focus their training, for example, on the contents of the flowchart. Workers master the information and can follow the steps outlined in the flowchart.

This process works well until the flowchart changes.

What happens next is predictable. Workers with weak document use skills are unable to adapt and their ability to work safely is compromised. The organization responds with more training. The process repeats itself each time there is a change, which is both costly and time-consuming.

By integrating essential skills into training programs, organizations provide workers with skills they can use over and over. A relatively minor adjustment to their training approach can reap big rewards.

Public and private sector organizations across Canada are taking note. Sector councils and apprenticeship training authorities, for example, are embedding essential skills within their technical training.

If you are looking at the effectiveness of your programs, you may just need to look at them from a different angle. An essential skills perspective could provide the answers you are looking for.

Michael Herzog, MBA, is the owner of Essential Skills Group Inc., a firm that helps private and public sector organizations incorporate essential skills into their operations.

[1] *Building on our Competencies*. Canadian Results of the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey Catalogue no. 89-617-XIE. 2003.

[2] www.cthrc.com/en/documents/CPPI_Report.pdf

[3] www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/home.shtml

If you're interested in sharing opinions or comments about workplace health and safety issues, please contact the magazine's editor through the WHS Contact Centre, 1-866-415-8690 (or 780-415-8690, if you are in the Edmonton area), or e-mail whs@gov.ab.ca.

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Membership on the *Occupational Health & Safety* magazine advisory board is open to any resident of Alberta with knowledge and experience in health and safety, and an interest in communicating health and safety information to the public. Anyone who is interested in joining the board should submit a letter of application to the managing editor of the magazine. The board meets three times a year in Edmonton. Board members do not receive remuneration or reimbursement for expenses related to meetings. See "Contacting the editor," below.

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Contacting the editor. We welcome responses to articles or information published in this magazine, as well as suggestions for future articles. You can reach the editor through the Workplace Health & Safety Contact Centre. Phone 1-866-415-8690 or e-mail whs@gov.ab.ca.

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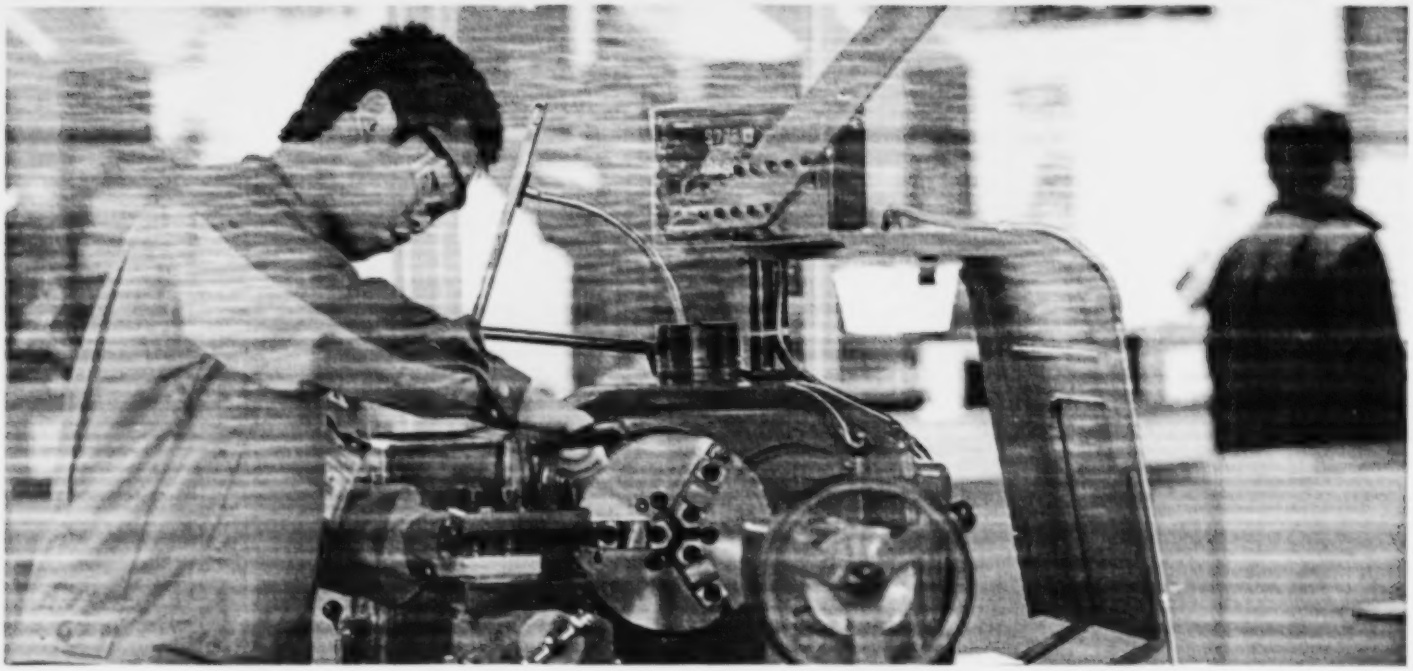


Photos from WorldSkills International

WORLDSKILLS CALGARY SPURS STUDENTS TO SAFER COMPETITION

by Cory Schachtel

WorldSkills 2009 is coming to Alberta. Thanks to Albertan efforts, the international competition that showcases trade, service and technical skills is safer than before.

On September 1–7, Calgary welcomes over 900 competing students, thousands of volunteers and over 150,000 visitors to Stampede Park, where the event is taking place. It ends with an acknowledgment of the competition winners during the half time show of the Labour Day Classic CFL game. Regional winners from 52 countries compete in 45 skill categories over four days. They do so in an environment that has never been so safe, organizers say.

It's the second time in the event's 59-year history that it is being held in Canada. Alberta was chosen in part because of the impressive safety system implemented in its regional competition, run by Skills Canada Alberta.

Terry Arseneau, safety manager for WorldSkills Calgary 2009, says that while WorldSkills has always had a good reputation, the competition had lacked a clearly defined system of protocols and expectations for competitors, supervisors and volunteers until 2005.

"There have been no major incidents throughout the competition's history, but some of that was luck because no procedures were written down. Now there are," he says. "Now, we have steps that are practised and in place for everyone."

> "A key goal is to leave students with a proper idea of the safety level expected in the real world."
>
> —Shawna Bourke, Skills Canada Alberta

When Arseneau joined WorldSkills Calgary a year ago, he immediately looked to Skills Canada Alberta as a guideline because it had an existing safety system. "Skills Canada Alberta was the main inspiration. Six years ago, they created safety manuals and orientations for the volunteers and supervisors, and that's what we're using as our base—we even have some of the same people working with us on WorldSkills Calgary."

While Skills Canada Alberta procedures haven't been used previously on a WorldSkills-sized scale, the system has been tried and tested, says Arseneau. He is confident it

will ensure an incident-free legacy for WorldSkills 2011 in London.

This year, all participants and supervisors will receive safety manuals. Before the on-site volunteers set anything up, they'll go through a safety orientation, which means that before a competitor touches a tool, every safety precaution has been taken. Once the competition begins, safety becomes even more important, especially if the competitor wants to win.

"The marking of safety is relatively new," says Arseneau. "There's always been a safety aspect, but it hasn't always been marked, and it hasn't been as big of a focus as we are making it now. Now it's being tracked, and we're running it more like the industries themselves do, promoting safety the same way they do on a job site."

The biggest change, in terms of safety, is most likely felt by the supervisors, who constantly patrol the floor and closely watch the competitors.

Arseneau says the experts must wear steel-toed boots, hard hats, safety glasses and whatever other safety equipment is required. "Occupational health and safety codes are being followed just like any job site. We are working towards meeting or exceeding all occupational health and safety standards."

Shawna Bourke is the communications coordinator for Skills Canada Alberta, which helps select the Albertan representatives for WorldSkills. Bourke is proud to see the Skills Canada Alberta safety model reach the WorldSkills level. She says safety is such a great concern because the competition is unique.

"Students come in and use specific equipment they may not have used before. There is also pressure—thousands of people, judges—we've even had parents sit on lawn chairs and watch their child compete," says Bourke. "It's a little different than school or the job site, but safety is just as great a concern. A key goal is to leave students with a proper idea of the safety level expected in the real world."

When students arrive they have a safety orientation as the volunteers do. The students are watched closely by supervisors who monitor the duration of the projects, making sure that competitors are being as safe as possible throughout the entire competition.

Bourke says that students may be tempted to hurry and rush as they come to the end of a project. The supervisors are expected to make sure safety standards are met from beginning to end.

A plaque is awarded for safest competitor, which is separate from best project, in each of the 45 categories, including the categories with less obvious safety issues.

"In the culinary arts competition, sanitation is worth 15 per cent of the mark and safe preparation is 25 per cent," says Bourke. "If the student cooks the most delicious meal ever, but they aren't clean or safe, they could lose."

Thanks to that diligence, safety is now a more prominent concern at every level of WorldSkills competition across Canada.

Cory Schachtel is a freelance writer.

Craig Spady, 2009 Team Canada Electrical Installations

RESOURCES

WEB LINKS

www.worldskills2009.com
This site is for WorldSkills Calgary 2009.

www.skillscanada.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=126&Itemid=171
This site has the list of Canada's competitors as well as information on previous competitions (from Skills Canada).

IN THE ALBERTA GOVERNMENT LIBRARY – LABOUR BUILDING

(For contact information, see page 7.)

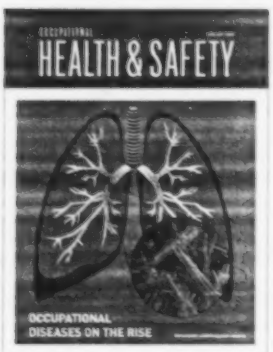
VIDEO

Young and New Workers: They Are Worth Your Attention (DVD 031)
Young and new workers need special attention because they are more at risk of injury than their older and more experienced counterparts. Starting a new job can be risky for workers of any age.

OH&S MAGAZINE WINS COVER DESIGN AWARD

We are happy to announce that *OH&S* magazine has won an award for Magazine Cover Design, Series, from *Applied Arts, Canada's Visual Communications Magazine.*

The winning covers (from issues September 2008, January 2009 and May 2009) will be published in the November issue of *Applied Arts* (November Design and Advertising Awards Annual). The magazine would like to acknowledge and thank Michael Wichuk and Kenneth McRobbie for their fine work.



OTHER NEWS

The 2009 Alberta Health and Safety Conference and Trade Fair will be held on October 26–28, 2009, at the Calgary Stampede Round Up Centre.

Over 30 educational sessions will be offered on a variety of topics relating to health and safety in all industries across Alberta.

For more information, visit www.hsconference.com.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR OUTSTANDING WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We're now accepting applications for the 2010 Workplace Health and Safety Awards. These annual awards, sponsored by the Occupational Health and Safety Council and Work Safe Alberta, recognize individuals and employers who embrace workplace health and safety values.

The health and safety accomplishment could be the creation of a new system, dramatic improvements to an existing one or a unique and innovative way to solve a particular problem. Or you might want to recognize an organization committed to health and safety for many years that is a leader in its industry. Please send us your stories.

Workplace Health and Safety Innovation Award

Workplace Health and Safety Leader Award

Workplace Health and Safety Performance Improvement Award

To apply for one of these awards or to get more information, go to employment.alberta.ca/whs-awards. Applications are being accepted until November 13, 2009.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Regarding the Perspective column, Young Workers Can Miss the Health and Safety Message, by Glyn Jones, in the May issue of OH&S magazine:

As a semi-retired baby boomer, I realize the problems present in the Nexters workforce were created by us. Sucking up to their demands is not the solution.

The emphasis on being tech-savvy is misplaced. Thousands of jobs at various levels have no need for using a computer, digital camera or Blackberry. If Nexters' attitudes towards the manual labour part of the workplace does not change, who is going to do the work? Not all of us can be supervisors/managers/office techs.

Thank you.
Tom Cameron

WORKPLACE SAFETY MESSAGE ON PARADE

The Work Safe for Life float made its third appearance at the 2009 Calgary Stampede parade on July 3.

The float was a convertible school bus, which was outfitted with dozens of recycled hard hats and giant safety glasses. It was designed to call attention to workplace safety and to the importance of personal protective equipment. Workers from Calgary businesses accompanied the float while demonstrating safe work practices.

An initiative through the cooperation of the Alberta government, industry and safety associations, the project was funded through corporate and industry donations and required hundreds of volunteer hours.

Participants 2009
Ad Rem Safety
AEDERSA
Alberta Association for Safety Partnerships
Alberta Construction Safety Association
Alberta Motor Transport Association
Avenues Access Systems
A&W Claresholm
BFL Canada Inc.
Calgary Stampede—Safety and Environmental
Canadian Society of Safety Engineering
Cargill Foods
Centennial Royal Canadian Legion
City of Calgary
City Wide Towing
DMG World Media/Global Petroleum Show 2010
Enmax Power Corporation
Gibson Energy ULC
Government of Alberta—Work Safe Alberta
Health & Safety Conference Society of Alberta
IATSE Local 212
Job Safety Skills Society
North American Midway Entertainment
Manufacturers' Health and Safety Association
Marlborough Mall
Mountain View Emergency Services
OH&S Consulting Services Inc.
Pro-tec Fire & Safety
Qualico Group
TSE Consulting
Telus
The Home Depot
Turner Valley Fire Department
WCB-Alberta

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780-415-8690 in Edmonton and area
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WORK SAFE
ALBERTA

Sign up for Workplace Health and Safety news
To be notified by e-mail of all new Workplace Health and Safety website postings, sign up for a FREE subscription service through employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/2984.html.

Alberta Government Library – Labour Building Site
To review the large selection of occupational health and safety information materials available through the Alberta government, go to employment.alberta.ca/1706.html.

To borrow materials, either contact your local library and make your requests through the inter-library loan system or visit the Alberta Government Library:

3rd floor, 10808 - 99 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 0G5

Library phone
780-427-8533

Audio-Visual Services phone
780-427-4671

To reach either of the above numbers toll-free in Alberta, dial 310-0000 followed by the area code and phone number.

Library fax 780-422-0084

Workplace Health and Safety is an Alberta Employment and Immigration program that falls under the jurisdiction of Minister Hector Goudreau.

NEW FALL PROTECTION GUIDELINES ROPE YOU IN FOR SAFETY

by Ryan Smith

Ray Cislo knows the heart-pounding, head-spinning, sweaty-palm feeling of being high above the hard, unforgiving earth—and he likes it.

"I work at height sometimes, and I sport climb and mountaineer," he says. "I thrive on the exposure and the freedom. It's fun."

But Cislo, a safety engineering specialist for Alberta Employment and Immigration, also knows precarious perches aren't exhilarating for everyone.

Heights can make it hard for some to breathe, let alone get work done, and overcoming the anxiety is not simply a case of mind over matter. It's a case of doing everything possible to prevent workers from falling.

From 1998 through 2007, a reported 56 workers in Alberta died from workplace fall incidents. Many more suffered injuries, both serious and minor. Unfortunately, the tragic numbers in Alberta are similar to those documented in other provinces. But losing even one person to workplace falls is one too many for Cislo, who is passionate about protecting workers from peril.

"I really enjoy talking to people about Part 9, which deals with fall protection, and Part 11, which deals with rope access work," he says, referring to parts of Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety Code. "That's what brings me to work every day."

Rewriting Part 9

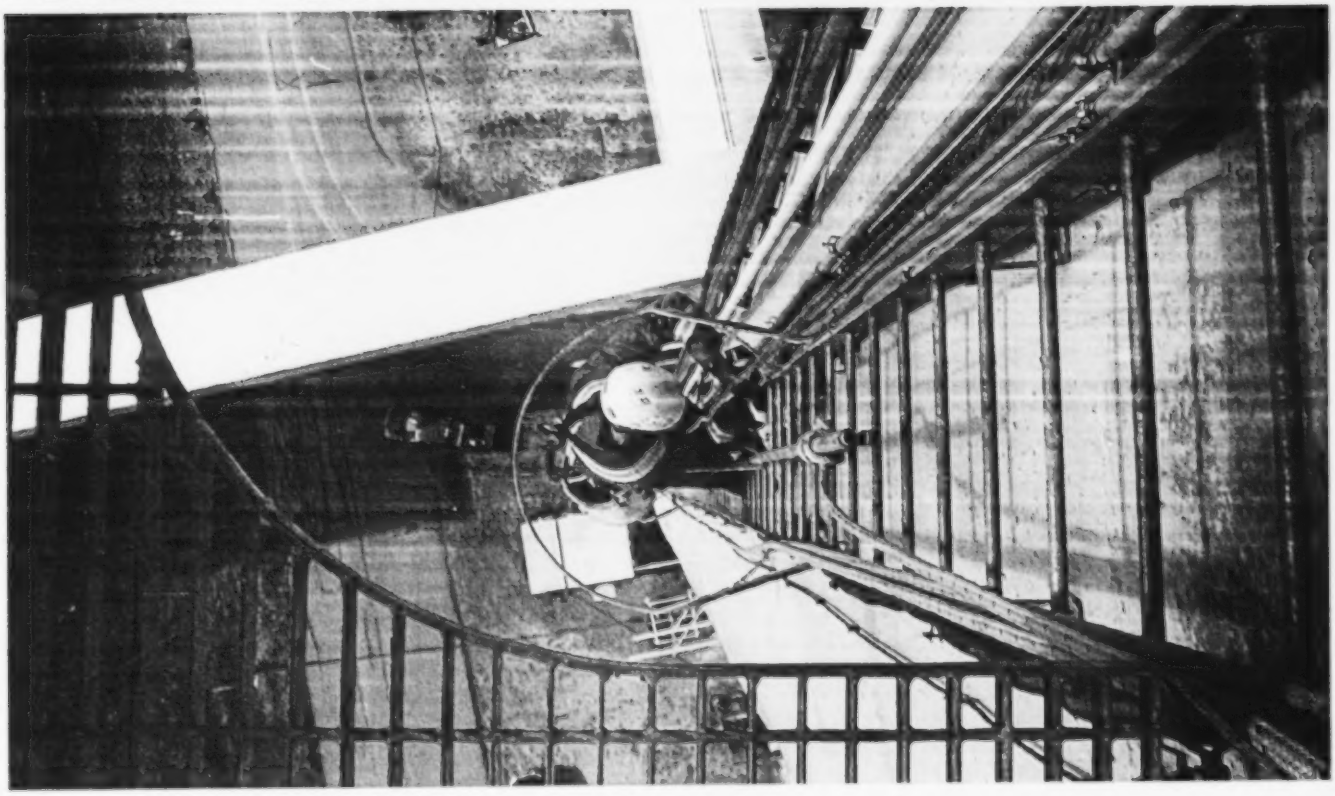
With the goal of keeping workers up and bringing fall injury numbers down, Cislo convened a technical committee of stakeholders—nearly two dozen employers, labour representatives and Alberta workplace health and safety officials—who starting working in the fall of 2007 and spent more than a year drafting a "massive rewrite" of Part 9.

The committee's changes, which were a response to a government mandate to review the OHS Code every three years, took effect July 1 this year. Among the highlights was a detailed expansion of the training requirements workers need to satisfy to become certified.

"The previous code said workers needed to be trained for fall protection, but it left it open to interpretation the extent of the training they needed. But now a comprehensive curriculum that training agencies must follow has been legislated in the code," says Cislo.

Garth Rattray is the chairperson of the Alberta Building Trades Training Association, whose members train workers from across Alberta in safety protection—everyone from carpenters to electricians to painters to plumbers and everyone in between.

"The new code specifically outlines what training is required for fall protection. For example, now it's clear that all workers need to be trained in the use of fall



Photos provided by Gravisys Inc. "Fall Protection Solutions"

protection equipment, and that's an excellent addition," he says.

Rattray also praised the new legislation related to working on fixed ladders and climbable structures.

"If workers stop on a ladder to take measurements or open a hatch or something like that, and if they can fall three metres or more, a fall protection system—harness, lanyard, anchor, shock absorber—must be used. We actually teach that now, but it's good to see it articulated in the code," he says.

However, one change in the code—a reduction in anchor strength standards—surprised Rattray.

"They reduced the anchor strength requirements from 22 kilonewtons to 16 kilonewtons, which means you can go from using 5000 pound anchors to using 3600 pound anchors," he says.

"We've been teaching 5000 pounds for the last 10 years, and I don't think [the revision] will change what we do a whole lot," he adds. "We tell them to look for the strongest, highest anchor possible, and that you want to be able to hang a pickup truck off it."

Rattray feels the reduction is reasonable considering the availability of improved safety equipment to meet the 3600 pound standard.

Improved equipment also spurred a change in the standards for maximum arrest force, which is the shock to the body that occurs when a protection system stops a fall. The load limits were reduced from eight kilonewtons, the standard in North America, to six kilonewtons, the standard in Europe.

"The reductions in anchor strength and maximum arresting force highlight one of the most important changes that were made to Part 9, and that is a liberalization of our attitude to European and U.S. equipment standards," Cislo explains.

"In the past, we referenced [Canadian Standards Association] standards almost exclusively, and the changes in the code enable the availability of a lot of new equipment that wasn't previously allowed for use in Alberta. In doing this, the technical committee did not reduce the level of safety provided for Alberta workers, but they did enhance their ability to choose new types of equipment," Cislo adds.

Improved equipment now available

Cislo cited certain types of European lanyards as an example of improved equipment options now available in Alberta under the new regulations.

"Some European shock absorbers elongate more than North American models, which allows workers to connect at their feet, take a huge fall and still not exceed the six kilonewton maximum arresting force," he says.

All of the changes in the fall protection requirements were achieved through consensus agreement among committee members, a process that led to a few spirited debates in the boardroom, says Jason Foster, director of policy analysis at the Alberta Federation of Labour.

> **"It's amazing, really, when you think about all of the places people can fall and hurt themselves at work. You think of utility workers, arborists, people stringing lights for a play in a theatre—it goes on and on."**
>
> **—Jason Foster**

"One debate stands out to me, because I was a crash test dummy in it," says Foster, who sat on the OHS Code review working group.

"We were discussing how far back you can legitimately put a scaffold from a wall. Obviously, the best thing is to put it against the wall, but there are circumstances where you can't do that, for whatever reason," says Foster.

The committee set up chairs to test how big a gap the code should allow between a scaffold and the wall, says Foster. He stood on a chair to see at what distance he could still slip through the gap.

As it is now written in the code, the allowable gap is not to exceed 250 millimetres.

In regards to other revisions, Foster was pleased to see the "hierarchy of controls" clarified with updated language. The controls outline a descending scale of safety options for workers, depending on the task at hand.

The first option is to avoid working at height, if possible. The next is to work with engineering controls (e.g., a guard rail). If that is not realistic, then a travel restraint, such as a tied off harness that prevents you from falling off a structure, must be used. If that is not possible, a fall arrest system, which prevents you from hitting the ground if you do go over an edge, must be in place.

"It's amazing, really, when you think about all of the places people can fall and hurt themselves at work," Foster says. "You think of utility workers, arborists, people stringing lights for a play in a theatre—it goes on and on. That's why this legislation is so important."

"I think we're headed in the right direction with regard to fall safety protection," he adds. "There's more work to do, for sure, but people working at heights are protected today better than they were before July 1."

Cislo also thinks that the changes to the code represent good progress.

"We had an excellent group working on this, national leaders in their field, in some cases, and we worked at it diligently," he says.

One careful step at a time.

Ryan Smith is a freelance writer in Edmonton.

FALL PROTECTION SYSTEM SAVING LIVES

Ken Shirt felt sick when he first heard his brother Harrison, an employee of his residential construction company, had tripped while working on a roof and tumbled over the edge.

But the feeling was short—because so was his brother's fall.

Harrison had been headed for the terra firma when his fall arrest system—harness, lanyard, rope and shock absorber—kicked in after a four foot drop and suspended him safely from harm.

"When you go down on a sheeting roof and start rolling, there's no way you're going to stop. No way. Gravity's going to do some damage," says Shirt, who owns Nisco Enterprise Ltd. "Obviously, the safety system we have has worked well for us."

For nearly six years, Shirt has equipped his employees with a fall protection system that was created in Alberta.

John Tucker, the safety manager of Carma Developers, developed the system in 2003 with colleagues from Qualico and Head to Toe Safety in order to meet the demands of new safety legislation at the time. The system has since been adopted by hundreds of employers throughout the province. It might have been a moneymaker for the developers, but their priority was safety. They never patented it.

In this fall arrest system, the roof strap is looped and choked around a 2 x 6 inch truss brace.

"We spent a lot of money and time—about 20 or 30 different tests on 20 or 30 different roof configurations—to prove the system would meet the load forces the code requires," Tucker says. "And yeah, we could have patented it, but we didn't. We work for big companies that are seen as leaders in the field, and we thought, You know what? This is important and it needs to get done. Let's just do it."

Tucker's reward is hearing stories about people like Harrison Shirt—and he's heard a lot of them.

"We know it has saved at least 15 people from hitting the ground, and that's really satisfying," he says. "That's exactly why we did it."

RESOURCES

WEB LINKS

employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-LEG_ohsc_2009.pdf
Changes to the OHS Code

www.afl.org/upload/OHSChangesJuly2009.pdf
Summary of the New Code [all sections] from the Alberta Federation of Labour

IN THE ALBERTA GOVERNMENT LIBRARY – LABOUR BUILDING

(For contact information, see page 7.)

VIDEO

Take Pride in Your Job: Fall Protection (DVD 040)
This video encourages oil and gas extraction workers to use fall protection and never be "un-clipped" and thus vulnerable when at height. The video features oil and gas extraction workers talking about their use of fall protection and sharing their personal stories about why fall protection should always be worn when working at height. The purpose of the video is to raise awareness of fall injuries in this industry and to provide information about the use, proper fit and inspection of fall protection.

High Impact Fall Prevention (VC 0322)
Falls kill 12,000 people in North America each year, 1500 of them at work. They account for much personal suffering and substantial losses in productivity. This graphic program re-creates 10 incidents that will remind us about shortcuts and other common safety mistakes that can lead to death or injury.

TRAINING UP IN A DOWNTURN

by Nordahl Flakstad

The economic belt-tightening of the past year might tempt some people to loosen their safety belts, but health and safety professionals urge workers and employers to see a recession as an opportunity to do better.

Lorne Kleppe, the executive director of the Manufacturers' Health and Safety Association, says it would be misguided for managers and supervisors to cut back on workplace health and safety when paring down operations during a recession.

"Informed business leaders know this is a good time to evaluate what's needed for the long and short term. Employers now have a chance they didn't have in the past to send people for new training or to strengthen the training they already had," says Kleppe. "Part of being successful is having good-quality training for employees. We're seeing an increased interest in our training."

Through its Rocky View and Edmonton training centres, as well as elsewhere in Alberta and at worksites, MHSA offers 33 courses that range from hazard assessment and forklift operation to disability management and safety basics. Despite its name, MHSA also trains workers in some other sectors, including retailing.

Layoffs can mean that while there are fewer jobs to go around, the people who are still working may have to shoulder new or greater burdens. Besides job losses, recessions are marked by job switching. Typically, in order to stay employed, workers are reassigned or switched into entirely different jobs or industries. That, Kleppe suggests, often means workers must refresh or adapt their existing occupational health and safety knowledge to meet specific requirements, such as those in manufacturing. Kleppe adds that safer and healthier workers are more productive, less stressed, less subject to absenteeism and not as likely to make Workers' Compensation claims.

> "Health and safety training programs can't be put on the back burner as extras," he says. "They're core to the business."
>
> —Doug Knight

A robust commitment to occupational health and safety remains a priority for the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees. AUPE President Doug Knight says the recession offers no reason to ease off. "Health and safety training programs can't be put on the back burner as extras," he says. "They're core to the business."

AUPE and the Alberta Government recently wrapped up a year-long review aimed at making workplaces safer and healthier for AUPE members. When the resulting program was rolled out in mid-June, Knight noted that instead of taking a short-term view, the government and the union "are instead raising the bar for health and safety in the midst of the recession."

In the private sector, the PCL family of companies has found no cause to gear down training. Headquartered in Edmonton, PCL is one of North America's largest construction organizations. Its employees logged 20.5 million hours of work last year, and thanks to a backlog of projects, work hours are expected to decline only modestly this year. Jim Barry, vice-president of health, safety and environment at PCL Constructors Inc., says PCL has the target of 35 hours a year of training (and more in many cases) for each PCL employee. He doubts the organization would have reduced that training target even if its work decline had been steeper.

"For PCL, investing in people is our most important commitment," he says.

Barry says the investment in employee training, even during difficult times, sends an important signal to employees that mentoring and training have always been and will always be an integral component to the success of the organization.

> "This is a time to make improvements that have been sitting on the shelf."
>
> —Kevin Flaherty, Alberta Workers' Health Centre

The breathing space that results from an economic slowdown can provide a welcome chance to upgrade existing workers' health and safety awareness. Faced with a less hectic work schedule, managers and supervisors may have an opportunity to take a broader look at their existing workplace health and safety priorities, procedures and practices.

Such reviews needn't result in more training, says Jim Moroney, executive director of the Alberta Municipal Health and Safety Association. He believes a more thoughtful approach can produce better results using fewer resources and less time than otherwise might have been directed to training.

"I believe when organizations fail to accurately define their problems or needs, and don't establish clear priorities they will often under-train or over-train their employees. Under these circumstances, it's unlikely that training objectives will be met and less likely that they can even be measured. 'Why are we spending this money and what am I getting out of it?' is a very healthy question," says Moroney.

Moroney says that all training programs should be evaluated to determine the degree to which the objectives were met and how they might be improved.

"This economic slowdown gives many of us an excellent opportunity to do just that," he says.

Kevin Flaherty, executive director of the Alberta Workers' Health Centre, agrees that low-cost measures can engage workers in workplace health and safety. With workers less busy than a year ago, Flaherty says it is a good time to encourage self-directed learning. It could involve having workers read the recent changes to Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety Code and then suggest how to better apply code requirements, such as on hazard assessment, in their workplace.

"This is a cheap and empowering confidence-builder," says Flaherty. "If you have some surplus capacity in your workplace right now, you can have people turn that time into an asset and not a liability and meet your legal requirements. This is a time to make improvements that have been sitting on the shelf."

The Edmonton-based Workers' Heath Centre, which is funded by labour organizations, corporations and other sources, informs and educates workers on employment issues. Its programs include two plays (Work Plays and That's Danger) that tour Alberta schools to deliver occupational health and safety messages. Each year, these plays connect the centre with up to 10,000 students, many of them part-time or soon-to-be full-time workers.

Flaherty says that questions asked after the performances and by phone give him a good sense of workers' health and safety concerns. The volume of questions hasn't changed that much, but the tone has altered, says Flaherty. While workers may have worried about cutting safety corners during the boom, the ready availability of other jobs made it easier to walk away from unsafe workplaces. Faced with job loss or being labelled complainers, tougher times may inhibit some workers from raising safety concerns, he says.

Forward-looking organizations can use the current lull to ready for economic recovery. They can alter their business models, making the necessary investments in equipment and systems they will need once the economy improves. It also can mean hiring and making sure that new and existing staff remain safe and healthy.

Nordahl Flakstad is a freelance writer in Edmonton and the owner of Flakstad Communications.

UPSIDE TIPS FOR DOWNSIDE TIMES

An economic downturn can create the following health and safety opportunities:

- Review existing procedures, practices and priorities.
- Have supervisors and experienced workers mentor junior staff.
- Perform overdue shutdowns to add new or upgraded safety procedures and equipment, including moving up on controls hierarchy [for example, improving building ventilation as an alternative to respirators].
- Reconsider and follow up on past occupational health and safety recommendations, including from past safety-meeting minutes.
- Provide additional training that may have been postponed during busier times.

PARTNERSHIPS NEWS

New Partners in health and safety
Partnerships would like to welcome its newest Partners in health and safety:

Retail Council of Canada
Champion Technologies
UFA Co-operative Limited

Partners are recognized as health and safety leaders in their industry. Through a memorandum of understanding, Partners commit to taking a proactive role in promoting workplace health and safety throughout Alberta. They promote the Partnerships program, and assist others with their health and safety systems and needs.

On-Site Audit Review pilot project—coming soon
All Certifying Partners conduct detailed desktop reviews of employer COR certification and maintenance audit reports. This review is limited to the submitted documentation, which is effective at identifying many audit report quality issues, but may not always identify issues with the auditor process. The concept of further validating audit findings by conducting on-site employer re-audits has been suggested for several years by CPs, Partners and auditors. While a full re-audit would require significant resources, Partnerships is proposing a streamlined and efficient On-Site Audit Review process that will be limited to evaluating key indicators of auditor performance.

The OSAR process is designed to be completed in one day (to minimize any disruption to the employer's business). It is intended to validate the auditor's work by comparing specific OSAR auditor findings to the original auditor's results. OSAR will focus on auditor performance.

Partnerships will be piloting this process in the near future by conducting 100 on-site audit reviews. The data gathered from this project will allow Partnerships to identify whether or not the OSAR process is necessary to supplement the current quality assurance system to ensure the validity of audit results. If the process is valid, Partnerships will determine the best methodology for implementation over the long term.

Is that COR valid?
All copies of Certificates of Recognition have an expiry date printed in the lower right corner of the certificate. As more project owners and employers require contractors to hold a valid COR to either bid for or perform work, the incidence of altered, modified and expired CORs being submitted in bid packages has increased.

Information on a COR can be verified quickly and easily online by visiting our website at employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PS_COR.pdf.

Partnerships
IN INJURY REDUCTION

Partnerships in Injury Reduction is a non-regulatory, province-wide injury prevention program sponsored co-operatively by government, labour and industry. The program offers:

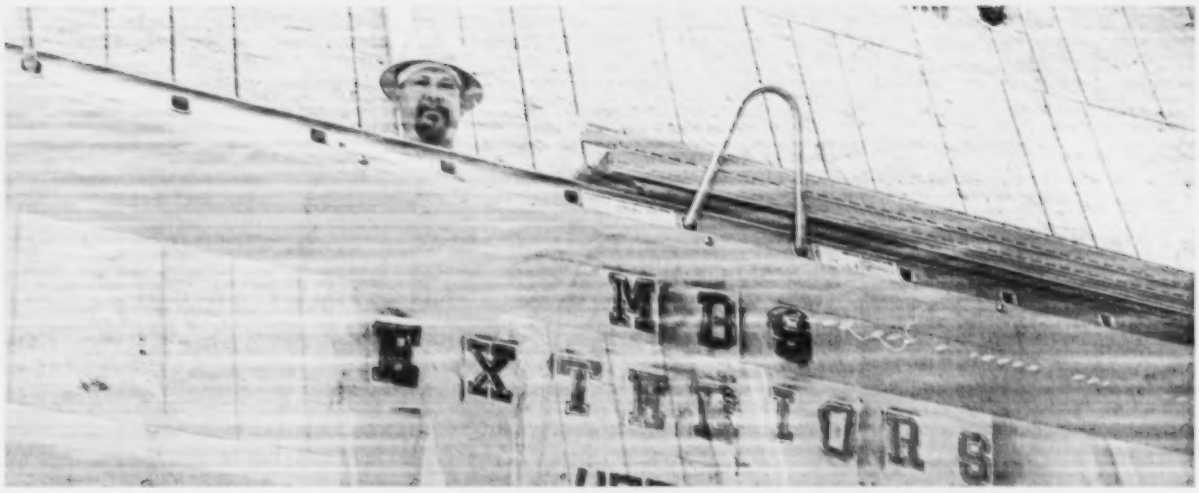
- tools to implement a health and safety management system
- guidance in applying for a Certificate of Recognition (COR)
- potential for premium rebates from the Workers' Compensation Board-Alberta

For more information, call the Partnerships Hotline at 1-866-415-8690 or visit employment.alberta.ca/whs-partnerships/.

Congratulations on your good safety record

The Alberta government is proud to congratulate the **2008 Best Safety Performers**, a designation awarded to Alberta companies that take workplace health and safety seriously day in and day out. Did your company make the grade? Check the complete list of 2008 Best Safety Performers at **www.employment.alberta.ca/whs-bestsafety.**

Government of Alberta



ONE MAN'S QUEST FOR SAFETY

by Wes Bellmore

Mike LaPointe has owned and operated a residential siding company for the past four years. Using information from a number of sources, Mike developed a workplace safety program over the last year that an occupational health and safety officer says seems to mirror the philosophy of Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety Act.

It was Mike's attitude toward safety that most impressed Barry Burns. "More than any other private contractor in any trade that I've ever come across," he says, "Mike took our conversations about health and safety to heart. He was receptive right off, which allowed us to start our dialogue on a professional basis."

While Mike's sources of safety information are diverse, his motivation to stay safe on the job comes from just one place: his family.

"I started getting serious about safety around the time my wife and I had a newborn," says Mike. "I'd had the odd incident here and there—with close calls on the job—and when I went to invest in some safety equipment I kind of balked at the price, because it wasn't cheap. I was holding my little guy in my arms as I was about to do the purchase, and the lady at the supplier's looked at me and said, 'It looks like you have somebody to come home to at night.' Well, that did it. I just spent the money."

Mike upgraded his equipment because he has worked alone for the past 18 months and recognizes that going solo presents some unique challenges.

"I had a mismatched scaffolding system, so to integrate the safety net system and end rails I traded up to the full Aluma-Pole system," he says. "I start working at six o'clock in the morning and I don't finish until eight or nine at night, so there's not always somebody on the job site if I do have a problem."

These precautions are noticed and appreciated by Mike's customers. Jordan Antoniuk, general manager for Curtis West Building Products, says he's never seen a workman with the same level of safety awareness. "I put Mike at the highest standard. He's the epitome of what every siding installer should aspire to."

Despite Mike's reliance on the right equipment, he believes a safety program is only half done without the right mindset. He says that awareness starts from the time he wakes up in the morning and takes a walk around the job site. He does a field-level hazard assessment every morning and when weather conditions change.

Mike also tries to ensure the safety of others on his work site. "I use signs. I use ribbons. I flag everything. I close areas off. I make sure that anyone who comes onto the location where I'm working knows the hazards."

Mike gathers his safety information from personal consultations as well as the Internet. He says initially what provoked him into improving his job safety was a small employer safety advisor from the Alberta Construction Safety Association.

"It didn't seem to matter where I worked," says Mike

with a laugh. "He'd smell me out! The advisor drove around the job sites, and when he saw the guys working he'd stop and give recommendations for safe job practices. A lot of us workers were just doing our thing and we weren't really being smart about it."

Mike took the initiative to complete small business health and safety management courses through the Small Employer Certificate of Recognition program (offered through the Alberta Association for Safety Partnerships). "I wasn't poked or prodded to take the courses," he says. "I just did it."

He also credits the websites of Occupational Health and Safety Canada, the Government of Alberta, the Alberta Construction Safety Association, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health as being frequent sources for safety updates, new ideas and ongoing safety information.

Mike has an easy answer for why he makes safety a crucial and evolving component of his work life: "I get to see my wife and family every day. I love what I do. I'm happy, and my wife feels so much better about me working alone."

Mike LaPointe

Photos by Barry Burns

RESOURCES

WEB LINKS

employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB_wa001.pdf
Workplace Health and Safety Bulletin: Working Alone, Questions and Answers

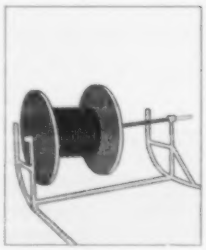
employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB_wa002.pdf
Workplace Health and Safety Bulletin: Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety Code, An Explanation of the Requirements for Working Alone

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS HAVE YOU MADE AT YOUR WORKPLACE?

If you've found a solution worth sharing, please send it to ray.cislo@gov.ab.ca.

CABLE SPOOL CRADLE

The Problem
Some work sites require the installation of vast lengths of cable. These products are delivered on spools of various diameters. Cable needs to be unwound from the spool and taken to its installation location. Uncoiling cable while the spool rests on the ground is strenuous work.



A Solution
An adjustable cable spool cradle lifts the spool off the ground, which makes it far easier to unspool cables.

Benefits
Workers have reduced worker exertion, possibly avoiding shoulder, back and arm injuries.

LIFTING TOOL FOR CARRYING POTTED PLANTS

The Problem
Workers must repeatedly stoop and grip plant pots to carry them. Stooping can contribute to lower back problems, and finger-pinch gripping can lead to tendonitis in the hands.

A Solution
A simple, specially designed handle can be used to pick up and carry containers.

Benefits
The tool handle provides a full hand "power grip" rather than a pinch grip, and workers may not need to stoop. Worker productivity may also increase.

CONVERGENCE—QUALITY WITH SAFETY

by Bob Christie

A number of years ago, the general manager of a big fabrication facility in Edmonton predicted to me that in 25 years health and safety would no longer be a separate department in organizations; it would be part of basic management, just like quality control became.

Earlier this year I saw what may be the beginning of that movement. A little company with a big name (Worldwide QC) responded to my call for examples of innovation in the safety arena. This Edmonton-based company has a new software package to track and handle the myriad of paperwork any complex safety system requires. Its software makes the job of running a health and safety program (including audits, hazard identification, corrective actions and all the rest) much easier.

Interestingly, the safety software grew out of the company's quality control software. The safety software can be used alone or, ideally, in conjunction with the company's quality assurance products. The software appears to have a wide range of tools to allow the user to work on many projects simultaneously, make up and distribute reports on both a daily and weekly basis, report events using safety performance index cards and even track relevant invoices.

While I cannot certify its usability in the field, I recommend that interested readers take a close look. Go to www.worldwideqc.com and contact the owners (two brothers) for a demonstration.

Health and safety is still a separate staff position in many companies, but more people are accepting that the ultimate responsibility lies with management. They cannot easily dismiss it as the purview of the safety officer. This product sees the relationship between quality and safety, and that impresses me.

Remember, I remain actively looking for innovations in health and safety anywhere in Alberta. They may be from governments, non-profit or even for-profit organizations, or other associations that have built the better mousetrap. Whatever the case, let me know at bchristie@shaw.ca.

Bob Christie is recently retired. He was a partner at Christie Communications Ltd. Bob supplies most of the web link resources for the articles in this magazine.

THE NEW OVERUSE INJURIES

by Ray Cislo

Forget tennis elbow, carpet layer's knee or pizza cutter's wrist. The next wave of overuse injuries is already here. They go by some instantly recognizable names—cell phone elbow, Blackberry thumb, Nintendinitis and Wii-itis. These injuries all result from parts of the body being overused and affected tissues not being allowed to recover with sufficient rest breaks. Nintendinitis and Wii-itis result from persons playing intensively with these games, repeatedly and for extended periods of time. While Nintendinitis has been reported in the medical literature since 1990, mainly in children and mainly affecting the thumbs, Wii-itis is a relatively new phenomenon that affects adults as well as children, and potentially most of the joints of the body.

Cell phone elbow

Persons making extensive use of their cell phones may begin to experience numbness, tingling and pain in the forearm and hand. The back surfaces of the pinkie and ring fingers in particular can become numb and tingle. This phenomenon is sometimes referred to as cell phone elbow, but it is known medically as cubital tunnel syndrome.

For those susceptible, the problem arises because of the tightly bent elbow position that is repeatedly held for long periods of time. Symptoms are the result of the ulnar nerve—the funny bone nerve that passes along the bony bump inside the elbow—being stretched and compressed. If allowed to progress, symptoms can worsen to include a loss of muscle strength, coordination and mobility of the arm. Writing and typing can become difficult. In chronic, untreated cases, the pinkie and ring fingers can curl into a claw-like position.

In most cases, symptoms can be treated by avoiding or modifying the activity that is causing the problem. Switching hands frequently while talking may help. Using a hands-free phone may also help. Repeatedly stretching the affected arm(s) behind the head to touch the opposite shoulder, and holding this position for at least 15 seconds may help reduce symptoms. Some people may find that sleeping at night with a towel wrapped around the elbow to prevent it from flexing may offer some relief and help recovery.

Other common activities that can cause the same symptoms include leaning on an elbow while driving or working and sitting at a computer keyboard with the elbows flexed more than 90 degrees. Body awareness and altering work and equipment positions can help prevent these problems.

Blackberry thumb

Blackberry thumb, otherwise known as texting tendinitis, results from excessive thumb movement caused by sending large numbers of text messages via smartphones and similar handheld devices. All of these devices rely on the user tapping out words on a miniature keyboard, often using only the thumbs. Many devices incorporate a thumbwheel used for scrolling through e-mail messages that also encourages use of the thumbs, which contributes to possible injury. Experts in injury prevention suggest that the key to avoiding injury is to reduce the extent to which the thumb is used. Sending very short messages and taking frequent breaks are obvious preventive measures. Persons already experiencing some discomfort may wish to try using the eraser tip of a pencil as a thumb replacement.

RESOURCES

Bonis, J. Acute Wii-itis. *New England Journal of Medicine*. June 7, 2007.

Darowish, M., N. Jeffrey, and P.J. Evans. What is cell phone elbow, and what should we tell our patients? *Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine*. May 2009.

Menz, R.J. "Texting" tendinitis. *The Medical Journal of Australia*. 2005; 182(6): 308.

WOMEN LEARN SAFETY SKILLS WITH NEW HEAVY EQUIPMENT COURSE

by Richard Cairney

A growing number of women are entering construction and other trades, and they need training to establish themselves as skilled, safe workers. A new heavy equipment operators' course offered jointly by Olds College and Edmonton-based Women Building Futures is meeting part of that demand. It is training a new crop of 15 female heavy equipment operators who will be ready to hit job sites this fall.

Established in 1998, WBF is a charitable organization that helps women gain training, employment and mentorship in the construction trades. Safety is a major part of their education.

Wanda Wetterberg, chief operating officer of WBF, says some of the students have prior safety training because they have operated various pieces of heavy equipment before. "But it doesn't matter what safety training they've had in the past—everybody takes the safety training here. There are no exceptions."

Student Donna Nicholson is one of the students who has operated heavy equipment in the past. While operating a snow plough for B.C. Highways, clearing snow off the mountainous roads in and around Merritt, B.C., Nicholson earned a reputation as a hard worker who knew how to operate machinery safely.

"I don't want to brag, but I did better than some of the younger men," she says. "I'd get called in to work overtime before some of the guys would."

Safety first

But Nicholson has no objection to the safety training the new program is providing her. Both she and fellow student Stacey Fleming are impressed with the course's emphasis on safety first. Both students cite the ground disturbance training as being particularly helpful.

That section of the program exposes less obvious dangers involved in operating heavy equipment. For example, if a person is running a tamping machine that vibrates the ground, what effect will it have on the trench another heavy equipment operator is digging 10 metres away? The course teaches students how to consider these factors.

"I was really impressed with the content on ground disturbance," says Fleming. "It covers everything right from using a shovel, all the way up. We need to know that buried utility lines can move—that 20 years ago that telephone line might have been buried two feet underground but that today, it might be one foot below the surface. You need to be aware of so many things."

Nicholson says that the course makes her look at safety first, automatically.

"You're always assessing the situation, knowing what other equipment is being operated nearby, keeping an eye out for it, and ensuring that you never put yourself or anyone else in danger."

A big part of the safety aspect of the training is to develop the ability to spot mechanical problems before they arise, and to know a machine's limitations. Pushing a machine beyond its capacity not only endangers others, but leads to financial losses as well.

"Costs vary, but you can easily end up operating a $1-million piece of equipment," says Fleming. "So the bottom line is that you behave as if that's your machine. The company is going to be looking at you if there is a problem, so you've got to look after it."

Student Stacey Fleming

Photos from Women Building Futures Society

Women growing in construction trades

Nicholson and Fleming are part of a growing number of women entering construction and other trades. According to Statistics Canada, the number of women apprenticing in construction trades in Alberta grew eight-fold from 1996–2006, but women still made up only 8.4 per cent of all construction apprentices in 2006.

> **"I'll tell people that I will work to the best of my abilities, but I will not cross the line at safety."**
>
> — student Donna Nicholson

As Wetterberg points out, women need to quickly establish themselves as skilled, safe workers in a male-dominated workplace. So the question arises: would some men assume that women operating heavy equipment are a safety risk? Would women be bullied into unsafe work practices?

Wetterberg says the 17-week program, which includes a two-week field placement, equips the students with the knowledge, confidence and ability to stand up and speak out when they have safety concerns.

"All WBF courses provide safety training and we do it up front, in addition to talking about safety literally every day," Wetterberg says. "It is just part of what we do in all of our programs."

WBF walks the walk on safety training, providing all of its students with seven safety certificates: WHMIS, petroleum safety training and construction safety training, dangerous goods transport, H2S safety, first aid, CPR and confined space training.

"It's not just practical—it's a philosophy for WBF. We pride ourselves in the safety training we provide students. They come to the job site with a lot of skills—and seven safety certificates."

Fleming and Nicholson both say they never would sacrifice safety over productivity.

"If I were being told to do something unsafe, I'd just point out the safety issues—tactfully," says Nicholson. "I'll tell people that I will work to the best of my abilities, but I will not cross the line at safety."

Adds Fleming: "I think we'll be safer than some more experienced operators, especially being new to this. I'll work to my capabilities and to the capabilities of the equipment I am operating, but I'm not going to endanger myself or anyone around me."

Richard Cairney is a freelance writer and a communications officer at the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Alberta.

RESOURCES

WEB LINKS

www.oldscollege.ca/programs/Apprenticeships/heavyequiptech.htm
Details regarding the Olds College Heavy Equipment Technicians Program

www.womenbuildingfutures.com
The Women Building Futures website

REASONABLE LIKELIHOOD OF CONVICTION

by Brian Caruk

Questions occasionally arise concerning the criteria used by the Crown in determining which incidents will result in charges being laid under our occupational health and safety legislation. These decisions are governed by the two-prong test established by Alberta Justice: that in order to proceed with a prosecution there must be a reasonable likelihood of conviction and that the prosecution must be in the public interest. Jurisdictions across the country have implemented policies similar to that instituted by Alberta Justice.

These criteria are applied through a system of pre-charge screening. This screening means that no charges are laid unless the Crown is satisfied those matters are properly before the Court.

Perhaps the more complex of these tests involves the analysis associated with the Crown's consideration of reasonable likelihood of conviction. There must be sufficient evidence that, if the matter were to proceed to trial, there would be a reasonable chance that the court would convict. This standard must be met at all stages of the prosecution. It is something the Crown assesses on an ongoing basis, not just when first determining if charges should be laid.

This step is much broader than simply taking a look at whether there is enough evidence to satisfy the Crown's burden of proving the act or essence of the offence. It must also delve into the strength of any defence(s) available to a company charged under the legislation. When looking at reasonable likelihood of conviction the Crown must also take into account the strength of a potential due diligence defence, and whether or not that particular sequence of events was foreseeable. Entities facing charges are not expected to meet a standard of perfection. That would be unfair.

Now you know that in assessing reasonable likelihood of conviction the Crown will be looking at both sides of the case and not just the prosecution side of things.

Brian Caruk is Acting Chief Crown Prosecutor with Regulatory Prosecutions, Alberta Justice.

THE LAST RESORT

REPORTING ON RECENT CONVICTIONS UNDER THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT

Between February 1, 2009, and May 30, 2009, there were three convictions under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Can-Der Construction Ltd.

On October 9, 2006, two workers were seriously injured when an excavation they were working in collapsed. Both workers were trapped for several hours and had to be rescued by the City of Edmonton fire department. On March 24, 2009, Can-Der Construction Ltd. pleaded guilty to one count under the Occupational Health and Safety Code. The total penalty of $90,375 was made up of a $2500 fine, a victim surcharge of $375 and the amount of $87,500 to the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology's occupational health and safety program.

Jim Gottiup Hansen

On April 10, 2006, a derrick man on a drilling rig had his left hand amputated while manually positioning a section of casing. On March 26, 2009, Jim Gottiup Hansen, a driller for Trinidad Drilling Ltd., pleaded guilty to one count under the Occupational Health and Safety Code. A total penalty of $4025 was made up of a fine of $3500 and a victim surcharge of $525. Trinidad Drilling Ltd. is scheduled for trial on October 19–30, 2009, at Leduc Provincial Court.

Border Paving Ltd.

On June 3, 2005, a worker was seriously injured near Whitecourt when a paving roller machine rolled over and crushed his leg. On April 20, 2009, Border Paving Ltd. pleaded guilty to one count under the Occupational Health and Safety Code. The total penalty of $100,750 was made up of a fine of $5000, a victim surcharge of $750 and $95,000 to the Red Deer College Foundation for funding safety-related programs.

WORKPLACE FATALITIES

Investigated in Alberta

February 1 to July 3, 2009

Workplace Health and Safety investigates most work-related incident fatalities that fall under provincial jurisdiction. In general, highway traffic, farm, disease or heart attack fatalities are not investigated. In many cases, investigation into these fatalities is continuing. Final investigation reports are filed at the Alberta Government Library–Labour Building site and can be reviewed there or at employment.alberta.ca/whs-fatalities.

Total fatalities investigated in 2008: 30

Fatalities investigated in 2009 (year-to-date, as of July 3): 15

For further information about comparing trends in fatalities over time, please see the Occupational Fatalities in Alberta report: **employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB_10yr_fatal.pdf.**

A 55-year-old male plant superintendent died after he tripped on some electrical cable when he entered the main door of a paint shop that was under construction.

A 26-year-old male floor-hand was fatally injured when he was struck by a drill line. The incident occurred when a drill pipe being lowered into a hole became hung up. A derrick hand immediately stopped lowering the drill pipe, but not before the drill line became slack. The floor-hand went over to the slack drill line, but at the same time the drill pipe dropped, pulling all the slack out of the drill line, which then struck the floor-hand.

A 35-year-old male metal fabrication worker was grinding on a piece of equipment using an unguarded angle grinder. The grinding wheel blew up and struck the worker in the head.

A 34-year-old female landscaper was struck and killed by a felled tree. Two workers were felling the tree nearby when it cracked. One of the workers shouted a warning, and the two workers moved sideways away from the planned fall line. One worker noticed that the female landscaper was still in the fall line and shouted at her. Her back was towards him, and she did not respond to his shout. The tree fell along its planned line and struck the female worker on the head.

A 27-year-old male worker was fatally injured when a load of roof forms fell on him. The worker was moving the forms on a roof deck using a lower crane. A rigger had set up the lift of forms using a basket sling rigging. While the worker was moving the forms to a new location, one sling slipped towards the centre of the load and the forms fell out of the rigging onto the worker.

A 36-year-old male worker was hit and crushed by the rotating counterweight of an operating oil well pump jack.

A 26-year-old male worker was fatally injured as he attempted to repair a hydraulic leak on a boom he was operating. The worker was positioned between two sections of the boom when a hydraulic failure occurred and one section of the boom collapsed, pinning him between the boom sections.

A 39-year-old male pipelayer was fatally crushed between two loaders. The pipelayer had stopped one loader to speak to the operator at the location where another loader was moving excavated materials. The pipelayer was crushed when the second loader backed into the stopped loader.

A 49-year-old male scaffold worker collapsed and died after informing his co-worker that he was not feeling well and sitting down on a plywood platform. He had been installing scaffold on the fifth level of an upgrader under construction.

A 23-year-old male concrete cutter died when he was pinned against a truck by a slab of concrete. Workers had finished the last cut on an opening for a doorway through a concrete pre-cast wall. The cutter was at the rear of the truck when the slab of concrete came loose and pinned him.

A 60-year-old male foreman was found collapsed on the floor by his co-workers, who went to investigate when he did not return from a break.

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:
CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT
Alberta Employment and Immigration
Occupational Health and Safety Director's Office
9th Floor, Labour Building
10808 – 99 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5K 0G5
E-mail ohs@gov.ab.ca

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Best Practice Guideline
for Workplace Health & Safety During Pandemic Influenza

Although the risk on most work sites is low, the Alberta government has released Best Practice Guideline for Workplace Health & Safety During Pandemic Influenza.

The guide provides information to workplaces on the following:

- legislated requirements
- hazard assessment and control in preparation for and during pandemic influenza
- best practices and strategies in workplace health and safety
- employment standards in the event of pandemic influenza

Copies can be found online at www.employment.alberta.ca/pandemic or by calling toll-free 1-866-415-8690 (780-415-8690 in Edmonton and area).

WORK SAFE ALBERTA

Government of Alberta